

give the commencement address at Passaic County Community College, in my district, but had I been present, I would have voted AYE.

I am a proud to co-sponsor this legislation. It is completely unacceptable to allow Iran to obtain nuclear weapons, and the government of Iran has isolated itself from the community of nations because of its refusal to negotiate or suspend its program. I have long supported strong sanctions on the Iranian regime to pressure them to abandon their nuclear program.

A nuclear Iran would pose an existential threat to Israel, our greatest ally in the Middle East. I have always been a strong supporter of Israel's right to exist and defend itself, and I believe that the nation of Israel truly shares the ideals of freedom and democracy with the United States. Additionally, as a state sponsor of terror, the possibility that Iranian nuclear weapons could fall into the wrong hands is all too real. This would greatly increase the chance that a nuclear weapon could be detonated anywhere in the world. For these reasons, we simply cannot afford to contain a nuclear armed Iran.

I commend the House of Representatives for passing this legislation by an overwhelming bipartisan majority, which demonstrates the incredible level of support in the United States Congress and among the American people for protecting Israel and preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons or nuclear weapons capability.

MY PRESENT VOTE ON H. RES. 568

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I voted present today on H. Res. 568 because of my concern that it contains language that could create a blank check for war with Iran. As best said by Col. Lawrence Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff of Secretary of State Colin Powell, "This resolution reads like the same sheet of music that got us into the Iraq War." This resolution threatens to undermine upcoming U.S.-Iran negotiations on May 23, 2012. While I am not disputing the fact that a nuclear-armed Iran would pose a serious threat to Israel and U.S. national security interests, I am concerned that the tone of this resolution could be used as fodder for future conflict.

While I am an ardent supporter of Israel and remain committed to supporting legislation that ensures their security, I urge my colleagues to support more balanced policies and diplomatic solutions as we enter into negotiations with Iran. As we struggle to get our economy back on track, we simply cannot afford the economic and social costs of another war.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. KAMEL FUAD MUAKKASSA

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Dr. Kamel

Fuad Muakkassa, a neurosurgeon whose passion, intellect and generosity changed the lives of everyone around him, died on Sunday at the age of 62.

Dr. Muakkassa's life was one dedicated to attending lives. A supremely skilled neurosurgeon, he had a zest for life so profound that it will live on in all those who had the privilege of knowing him. He was married to the love of his life, Rola Mansour for 27 years. He enjoyed spending time with his wife, his children and grandchildren, upon whom he imparted many of his best qualities, including his giving nature, his unique love of life, his humor and his wit. Dr. Muakkassa mastered an extraordinarily wide range of talents and insisted on sharing his expertise by teaching those around him. His passions included playing golf and backgammon, travel and international affairs. All of this was in addition to the undeniable impact of his life's work: his relentless clinical and humanitarian achievements in the world of neurosurgery.

As Primary Founder, President and CEO of The Center for Neuro and Spine Inc. (CNS) and former Chief of Pediatric Neurosurgery of Children's Hospital of Akron, Dr. Muakkassa was a Board Certified Neurological Surgeon who had been serving the community for over 27 years. He most recently co-founded Akron General's Neuroscience Institute in 2011, which focuses on the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitations of the disorders of the brain, spine and peripheral nervous system. Dr. Muakkassa performed more than 8,000 neurosurgical procedures and treated over 10,000 patients and had the uniquely broad background of addressing both pediatric and adult spine, brain and peripheral neurological disorders. Dr. Muakkassa advanced the treatment options in his community by being the very first surgeon in Akron to perform an Anterior Cervical Discectomy with Fusion and Plating. Thousands of these surgeries are now performed here annually. Additionally, Dr. Muakkassa was the first surgeon to perform cutting-edge awake surgery for treating epilepsy patients at Akron General Medical Center back in 1986. Other firsts include placing pumps or spinal electrodes for pain management and spasticity, vagal nerve stimulators for depression and seizures and untethering complex spina bifida tumors.

Dr. Muakkassa graduated from The American University of Beirut with a degree in Medicine in 1974. He went on to complete his residency in General Surgery where he served as Chief Resident. Dr. Muakkassa continued his education with a residency program in Neurosurgery at The Upstate Medical Center in New York where he was again elected Chief Resident. Pursuing his pediatric interests, Dr. Muakkassa studied Pediatric Neurology at Strong Memorial Hospital and completed his Pediatric Neurosurgery fellowship at the prestigious Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto where he served as Chief Fellow.

Dr. Muakkassa most recently served as Associate Clinical Professor in Neurosurgery at Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine (presently NEOMED). He also served as Chief of the Neurosurgery division at Barberton Citizens Hospital and Mercy Medical Center. He is published in peer review journals and received multiple awards including the Summit County Award of Excellence for Outstanding Medical Services to the Community, Teacher of the Year Award and the

award for medical services to the Bosnian war victims. He was also a member of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons (AANS), the Congress of Neurosurgeons (CNS), Summit County Medical Society, Ohio State Medical Association, International Society of Pediatric Neurosurgery, Ohio State Neurological Society and the Joint Section on Neuro-trauma and Critical Care of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Kamel devoted considerable time and resources to charitable organizations. Most notably, he was president of the Druze Orphans and Charitable Organization, which provides housing, education and healthcare to Lebanese children in need.

Dr. Muakkassa, survived by his wife, Rola; his son, Fuad; his daughter, Leila and grandchildren, will forever be an accomplished Doctor, philanthropist, husband, and father whose dedication to medicine, and selflessness will be carried through the legacy he has left in the field of medicine.

RECOGNIZING THE 90TH
ANNIVERSARY OF TEMPLE ISRAEL

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow Temple Israel of Miami will be celebrating its 90th anniversary. Temple Israel is a pillar of the South Florida Jewish community. It is one of South Florida's oldest treasures and our community has truly been blessed over the years by its presence.

From the very beginning, Temple Israel's founders believed that they could create an organization that would make a positive change in the community. They sought to create bonds of loyalty within the international Jewish community, and within the South Florida community. For 90 years now, the Temple Israel congregation has consistently lived up to this purpose. The early leaders set a tradition to "live Judaism" by being actively engaged in local, national and world issues. Temple Israel's congregation continues to be among the most civically engaged members of our South Florida community.

The Temple Israel congregation has not only had a positive impact on the Jewish residents in South Florida, but also the community as a whole. From housing the Bridgeport Academy charter school that provides education for students from diverse backgrounds, to their tutoring and housing programs like the Dorothy Serotta Social Justice Forum program, Temple Israel's congregation is actively involved in the community year round. The members of Temple Israel's congregation are a shining example of "Tikkun Olam." They carry on the Temple's legacy of courage, compassion, service, and inclusiveness.

I cannot thank Temple Israel enough for its leadership and positive impact as we celebrate its 90th anniversary. I look forward to seeing how the organization evolves as it continues to make a significant mark on our South Florida community.